

Pharma Dynamics takes lead in translating medicine information leaflets into isiZulu

Pharma Dynamics is the first South African pharmaceutical company to translate medicine information leaflets into isiZulu.



Source: [Flxabay](#)

Nicole Jennings, spokesperson for Pharma Dynamics says the right to healthcare is a fundamental human right, which is recognised by the Constitution.

“An important part of this right is for the public to have access to patient information leaflets (PILs) that accompany medicines in their respective native languages.”

She says even though it is important to heed the advice of a doctor when it comes to medication, PILs are documents of primary importance, because they enable patients to take their prescribed medication safely and correctly.

“Not everyone in our country is fluent in English or Afrikaans, nor can we assume that they understand specific medical terms in these two languages, which is why we felt it important to make these documents available in another mother tongue spoken by a large part of the local population.

“Providing this type of information in another local language ensures that a greater number of people have equal access to vital medical information. It promotes inclusivity and helps bridge language barriers, making healthcare more accessible to

these communities.”

Other benefits of translating these documents into more South African languages include:

- **Effective communication:** Better communication between healthcare practitioners and patients is essential for safe and effective healthcare. When medical information is available in the patient's native language, it facilitates a clearer understanding of important instructions, dosage guidelines, potential side effects, and other crucial details.

Conversely, misunderstanding medical information can lead to errors in treatment or medication misuse, which can have serious consequences.

- **Cultural sensitivity:** Communities often have unique cultural beliefs, practices, and perspectives on health and illness. Translating information into their language allows for the incorporation of culturally sensitive language and concepts, making it more likely that individuals will trust and follow medical recommendations.
- **Informed decision-making:** Informed consent is a fundamental principle of medical ethics. Translating information into local languages empowers patients to make informed decisions about their healthcare. Without access to comprehensible medical information, individuals may not fully understand the risks and benefits of treatments, potentially leading to uninformed decisions.
- **Health disparities:** Many communities face health disparities and a higher burden of certain diseases and conditions. Providing medical information in their own language can help address these disparities by promoting better health literacy and understanding of preventative measures and treatment options.
- **Improved health outcomes:** Ultimately, when patients have access to medical information in their native language, it can lead to better adherence to treatment plans, improved health outcomes, and a reduction in healthcare-related complications.

Twenty-seven of Pharma Dynamics’ product leaflets have been translated into isiZulu, adding to the existing PILs available in English and Afrikaans already.

Jennings says it’s a starting point, and if feasible, the company may consider translating PILs into other local languages as well.

“PILs are documents that patients often refer to whenever they have doubts or simply want to obtain more specific information about the medicine that has been prescribed.

“Translating these leaflets into local languages is crucial for ensuring equitable access to healthcare, effective communication between healthcare providers and patients, informed decision-making and ultimately improving the overall health and wellbeing of South Africans.”

The isiZulu PILs are accessible via the QR code on the medication packs.